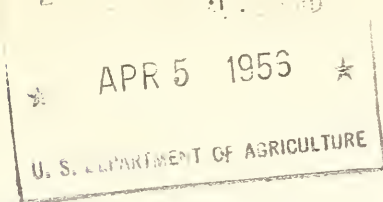


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# STATISTICAL SUMMARY

Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S.D.A. .... Washington, D. C. .... February 18, 1955..... SS147

## January Brought Needed Rain and Snow

Weather in January generally improved conditions for 1955 crop production. Soaking rains covered most southern States which had suffered prolonged drought. Also, the varying amounts of snow or rain which fell in important North Central, Pacific, and some southwestern areas eased to some extent the moisture shortage which has worried farmers during the past two crop seasons. Some sections, however, got very little precipitation and much more will be needed everywhere as the season progresses. Western irrigation water supply prospects are not promising at this date.

## Winter Wheat Prospects

Winter wheat prospects in most North Central and central Plains areas were maintained or improved by rain or snow. The early-seeded grain crops in South Central and Southeastern States made only slow growth due to cold weather, but have moisture for quick recovery. Winter wheat prospects are good in Montana and the Pacific Northwest, but much wheat in Idaho, Colorado, and South Dakota needs more moisture or snow cover. Conditions were most critical in the extensive wheat area embracing the Texas northern High Plains, northwestern Oklahoma, and adjacent parts of Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico, where soils are very dry and land has insufficient plant cover to prevent soil blowing.

## Citrus Crops

The 1954-55 orange crop is estimated at 133.7 million boxes, 6 percent above the previous crop. Utilization to February 1 is smaller than to the same date a year ago, so that 10.5 million boxes more were available February 1 than a year earlier.

The grapefruit crop is forecast at 43.6 million boxes--10 percent less than last season and 13 percent below average. Utilization to February 1 totaled about 17.5 million boxes compared with 19 million boxes to February 1, 1954.

The California lemon crop is placed at 14.6 million boxes--9 percent below last season but 17 percent above average.

## Vegetables

Vegetable crops suffered considerable cold damage during January. Prospective total fresh market supplies of the 20 commercial vegetables produced in the winter season are now about 7 percent below last year. Wet soils and below-normal temperatures also slowed planting and development of spring vegetables in most early sections.

## Livestock and Poultry Inventory January 1, 1955

Livestock and poultry on farms and ranches showed a net increase of 3 percent during 1954. The total for January 1, 1955, was 7 percent below the peak of January 1, 1944. The aggregate increase this past year resulted from a substantial increase in hog numbers and small increases in cattle, chickens, and turkeys. Sheep and lambs, horses, and mules were down from a year ago.

### Record high number of cattle and calves

The January 1 inventory of cattle and calves showed a further slight increase to a new record high of 95.4 million head. The new record marked the 6th successive annual increase from a recent low point of 76.8 million head on January 1, 1949. By classes, numbers compared with a year earlier as follows:

Cows and heifers 2 years old and over kept for milk--24.4 million--down 1%.  
Beef cows 2 years old and over--24.2 million--up 1%, new record high.  
Heifers 1 to 2 years kept for milk cows--6.0 million--down 1%.  
Heifer calves kept for milk cows--6.6 million--up 1%.  
Other calves under 1 year--17.9 million--up 2%; largest of record.  
Steers--8.3 million--up 2%.  
Bulls--1.8 million--down 3%.

### Hog numbers up 13%

Hogs on farms January 1, 1955, are estimated at 55 million head--13 percent more than a year earlier but 10 percent less than the 1944-53 average. Hog

## Production Comparisons

Commodity	January, 1954	January, 1955
Milk, (bil. lb.).....	9.2	9.1
Eggs, (bil.).....	5.5	5.8
Beef, (dr. wt., mil. lb.).....	19,368	19,681
Pork & lard, (mil. lb.).....	19,776	19,876
Lamb & mutton, (dr. wt., mil. lb.).....	1,644	1,645
All meats, (dr. wt., mil. lb.).....	120,669	121,132

<sup>1</sup>January-December under Federal inspection.

## Nonfarm Indexes of Interest to Agriculture

Index	Base Period	Dec. 1953	Nov. 1954	Dec. 1954
Wholesale prices of food.....	1947-49=100	103	103	101
Retail prices of food.....	1947-49=100	112	111	110
Weekly factory earnings.....	1947-49=100	147	143	144

numbers were higher in all regions, with greatest increases in the North Central, South Central, and Western States.

#### Fewer sheep and lambs

Sheep and lambs declined for the third successive year. The total of 30.9 million sheep and lambs on January 1, 1955, was 1 percent below a year ago. Stock sheep totaled 27 million head, about the same as a year earlier, while the number of sheep and lambs on feed for market was down 4 percent. The number of ewe lambs increased 9 percent.

#### Horses and mules continue decline

Inventories of horses and mules continued to decline. Horses were estimated at 3.1 million head, down 9 percent from a year earlier. During 1954, mule numbers declined about 10 percent to a total of 1.4 million head.

#### More chickens on farms

Chickens on farms January 1 totaled about 447 million--1 percent more than a year earlier but 6 percent less than the 1944-53 average.

#### Turkeys increase

Farm holdings of turkeys (excluding turkey fryers) on January 1 totaled 5.4 million, 3 percent more than a year earlier but 6 percent less than average. Light-breed hens were down 16 percent from a year earlier while heavy-breed hens were up 5 percent.

#### More Cattle and Calves on Feed

There were 8 percent more cattle and calves on feed on January 1, 1955, than a year earlier. The estimate of 5,816,000 head compared with 5,394,000 head a year ago and the 1949-53 average of 4,893,000. The number on feed in the North Central States was 4 percent above a year earlier. In the 13 western States it was up 22 percent.

In 14 States that had 87 percent of the cattle and calves on feed January 1, 1955, 33 percent of the cattle and calves weighed less than 600 pounds. About 78 percent of the total had been on feed less than 3 months. Feeders intended to market 44 percent of their cattle during the first 3 months of 1955.

#### Aggregate Value of Livestock and Poultry Inventory Declines

Even with a slightly larger aggregate number of livestock and poultry, the farm value of 11.4 billion dollars was 4 percent below a year earlier and substantially below the record high of 19.6 billion dollars on January 1, 1952. Lower average prices for cattle, hogs, chickens, and turkeys more than offset higher average prices for sheep, horses, and mules to hold the aggregate value below a year earlier.

#### January Milk Production Less Than Last Year

Milk production in January is estimated at 9.1 billion pounds, a little less than last year, but 10 percent above the 1943-52 January average. This quantity is well below average on a consumer per capita basis.

#### Rations Fed to Milk Cows in 1954

Grain and other concentrates fed--18 3/4 million tons, second largest quantity on record.

Quantity fed per cow--1,659 pounds, slightly below 1953 record.

Quantity fed per 100 pounds of milk produced--30.2 pounds, 2 percent below 1953.

Value per 100 pounds--\$3.30, down 4% from 1953.

Feed cost per 100 pounds of milk--99 cents, 6% below 1953 average, 4% above average.

Homegrown--a little over half.

Contents of ration fed on dairy reporters' farms:

Grains.....59% Commercially mixed

Corn.....32% feeds..... 29%

Oats.....23% Wheat millfeeds..... 3%

Oil seeds or meals 4% Other feeds..... 5%

Milk-feed price ratio (pounds of concentrate ration equal in value to 1 pound of whole milk) 1.19--6 percent below the longtime average.

Butterfat-feed price ratio (pounds of concentrate ration equal in value to 1 pound of butterfat) 19.7--lowest since 1934.

Roughage fed per milk cow Oct. 1953-May 1954:

Hay--2.2 tons (alfalfa mixtures 59%; clovers and lespedeza 27%)

Silage--2.1 tons (corn 71%; grass 22%)

Other dry roughage--0.1 ton.

#### Dairy and Poultry Products--December 1954

Item	December 1954		Jan.-Dec. 1954	
	Quantity	Change from Dec. '53	Quantity	Change from 1953
Chicks hatched <sup>1</sup> -----	Millions 86	Percent -26	Millions 1,873	Percent + 3
Chicks placed <sup>2</sup> -----	48	-22	709	+ 3
Poults hatched <sup>1</sup> -----				
Heavy breeds-----	.5	+58	49.8	+ 8
Light breeds-----	1.6	+22	21.3	+22
Tested for pullorum disease:	Thous.		Thous.	
Turkeys, heavy breeds-----	634	- 1	<sup>3</sup> 1,784	<sup>3</sup> + 4
Turkeys, light breeds-----	72	0	<sup>3</sup> 360	<sup>3</sup> -23
Chickens for broiler prod. --	764	+ 4	<sup>3</sup> 6,410	<sup>3</sup> + 8
All other chickens-----	700	-20	<sup>3</sup> 3,590	<sup>3</sup> -11
Poultry canned-----	Mil. lbs. <sup>4</sup> 21.0	<sup>4</sup> +30	Mil. lbs. <sup>5</sup> 210.7	<sup>5</sup> +25
Production:				
Liquid egg-----	14.3	- 3	465.7	+13
Dried egg (egg solids)-----	1.3	+ 8	22.4	+15
Frozen egg-----	9.8	-12	361.2	+ 5
Evaporated whole milk-----	154.5	- 2	2,539.8	- 1
Dry nonfat milk solids (for human food)-----	84.8	-12	1,287.5	+ 6
Butter, creamery-----	97.0	-11	1,449.2	+ 3
Cheese, American-----	61.2	- 8	1,022.5	0
Ice cream-----	Mil. gals. 37.4	+ 1	Mil. gals. 591.9	- 2

<sup>1</sup>By commercial hatcheries. <sup>2</sup>13 principal broiler producing areas.

<sup>3</sup>July-Dec. <sup>4</sup>November. <sup>5</sup>Jan.-Nov.

#### Record High January Egg Production

Egg production in January totaled 5,771 million eggs, a new high for the month--5 percent more than in January 1954 and 20 percent above the 1944-53 average.



## Farmers Plan to Buy Fewer Chicks

Farmers plan to buy 18 percent fewer chicks this year than they bought last year. Some difference between their February plans and their actual purchases is to be expected depending largely on egg and feed prices during the coming hatching season. All parts of the country plan decreases this year.

## Broiler Production Up in 1954; Gross Income Down

Commercial broiler production in 16 important States totaled 822 million birds in 1954--12 percent more than in 1953. The 16 States produce about three-fourths of the Nation's broilers. The average price received was 22.8 cents per pound live weight compared with 26.8 cents in 1953. Gross income from sales in the 16 States was \$571 million--5 percent less than in 1953.

## Potato Stocks Smaller Than Last Year

Stocks of merchantable potatoes on January 1, 1955, are estimated at 118 million bushels--7.9 percent less than a year earlier. These stocks are held by growers and dealers in or near producing areas and include all potatoes available for sale at any price for table stock, seed, livestock feed, starch, and other processing. The estimates do not include potatoes saved for food, seed, and feed on farms where grown and expected losses for the entire season through shrinkage, decay, and waste. In Maine, sales of 1954-crop potatoes to starch factories are expected to be quite large chiefly because of poor quality and small size. Of the 8 million bushels sold before Jan. 1 from the 1954 Maine crop, 22 percent went to starch factories, compared with 17 percent of total sales of the 1953 crop to Jan. 1, 1954.

## Grain Stocks in All Positions January 1, 1955

	Million bushels	
Wheat	1,460	Nearly a tenth larger than on Jan. 1, 1954, the previous January record. Farm stocks smallest since 1941; off-farm stocks are a record for the date.
Rye	25.4	Largest Jan. 1 stocks in 10 years; 18% above Jan. 1954. About 35% is stored on farms.
Corn	2,799	Largest Jan. 1 stocks on record; 4% more than Jan. 1954 stocks. Farm stocks a little above average but off-farm position is much larger than any previous Jan.
Oats	1,016	Over a fifth larger than a year ago.
Barley	284	Largest of record; 59% larger than on Jan. 1, 1954.
Sorghum grain	189	Nearly 2½ times as large as a year ago and exceeded only on Jan. 1, 1951.
Soybeans	261	Largest Jan. 1 stocks of record; 37% larger than a year earlier and 15% larger than the previous high in January 1951. Most of the increase is in farm stocks.
Flaxseed	31.4	A tenth smaller than stocks held a year earlier but a sixth larger than Jan. 1, 1953, stocks. Farm stocks made up a little more than half of the total compared with about a third usually.

January 1 stocks add up to records on this date for the tonnage of feed grains, for reserves of food grains, and by a large margin for the total of the six grains in storage--over 151 million tons.

## Farm Employment at Yearly Low

There were 5,789,000 persons at work on farms in late January, 488,000 less than a month earlier. In comparison with a year earlier, the number of persons working on farms was 162,000 less, a drop of 3 percent. The number of family workers decreased 3 percent while the number of hired farm workers was 1 percent less.

## Parity Prices for Farm Products and Average Prices Received by Farmers

Commodity and unit	Average price		Parity price
	Dec. 15, 1954	Jan. 15, 1955	Jan. 15, 1955
Wheat, bu..... dol.	2.12	2.14	2.51
Corn, bu..... dol.	1.39	1.40	1.82
Peanuts, lb..... ct.	12.5	12.6	13.6
Cotton, Amer. upland, lb..... ct.	32.67	32.51	35.22
Potatoes, bu..... dol.	1.05	1.13	1.46
Hogs, 100 lb..... dol.	17.00	17.00	21.40
Beef cattle, 100 lb..... dol.	15.60	16.20	21.40
Calves, 100 lb..... dol.	15.90	17.20	23.40
Lambs, 100 lb..... dol.	17.50	18.50	23.40
Butterfat, lb..... ct.	58.1	57.5	73.9
Milk, wholesale, 100 lb..... dol.	4.33	<sup>1</sup> 4.19	4.70
Chickens, live, lb..... ct.	17.6	22.2	29.1
Eggs, doz..... ct.	32.7	32.2	46.4

<sup>1</sup>Preliminary.

## Prices Received and Prices Paid by Farmers Index Numbers, 1910-14=100

Item	Jan. 15, 1954	Dec. 15, 1954	Jan. 15, 1955
Prices received by farmers.....	259	239	244
Crops.....	240	241	248
Food grains.....	233	239	241
Feed grains and hay.....	207	202	204
Tobacco.....	420	430	425
Cotton.....	254	276	275
Fruit.....	222	207	222
Coml. veg. for fresh mkt. ....	271	216	263
Oil-bearing crops.....	268	279	274
Livestock and products.....	277	237	240
Meat animals.....	309	257	263
Dairy products.....	274	264	258
Poultry and eggs.....	213	156	163
Prices paid by farmers:			
All commodities.....	263	261	264
Commodities used in living.....	271	272	273
Commodities used in production...	254	250	254
All commodities, interest, taxes, and wage rates.....	282	279	283
Wage rates <sup>1</sup> .....	525	502	521
Parity ratio (prices received to prices paid by farmers).....	92	86	86

<sup>1</sup>Seasonally adjusted.

Revised monthly cash receipts by States and commodity groups for the year 1954 will be published in the next issue of the Farm Income Situation, to be released March 4.

## Farm-Retail Price Spreads

Marketing Margin and Farmer's Share of the Consumer's  
Dollar for Market Basket of Farm-food Products

Year and month	Retail cost <sup>1</sup>	Farm value <sup>2</sup>	Marketing margin	Farmer's share
1954 average <sup>3</sup> .....	\$ 985	\$ 427	\$ 558	43%
1953--Dec. ....	995	443	552	45
1954--Nov. ....	967	411	556	43
Dec. ....	960	401	559	42

<sup>1</sup>Retail cost of average quantities of farm foods purchased per urban wage-earner and clerical-worker family in 1952, calculated from retail prices collected by Bureau of Labor Statistics.

<sup>2</sup>Payment to farmers for equivalent quantities of farm produce minus imputed value of byproducts obtained in processing.

<sup>3</sup>Revised.

For comparisons with earlier months and years see The Marketing and Transportation Situation.

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